



June 18, 2018

AGENDA ITEM 10 A

CORRESPONDENCE

TYPE OF ITEM: Information

The following correspondence has been received by the CRTPA subsequent to its last meeting:

- Letter to CRTPA Chair Maddox from Kevin Graham, Executive Director, FSU Real Estate Foundation, dated May 25 related to Gaines/Stadium/Lake Bradford Intersection and Orange Avenue

ATTACHMENT

Attachment: May 25 Letter to CRTPA Chair Maddox from Kevin Graham, FSU Real Estate Foundation



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
REAL ESTATE FOUNDATION

May 25, 2018

Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency
Attn: Nick Maddox, Chair
300 S. Adams Street, A-19
Tallahassee, FL 32301

Dear Chairman Maddox,

On behalf of Florida State University, we would like to call attention to two specific infrastructure projects that are essential to student/pedestrian safety as well as the future economic development opportunities in southwest Tallahassee.

Gaines/Stadium/Lake Bradford Intersection:

As partners in the local community, we are excited to see such an amazing transformation along the Gaines Street Corridor. The surge in development has created a new and vibrant landscape between the campuses of FAMU and FSU. However, with this new development comes the responsibility to plan for and implement appropriate student/pedestrian safety measures. Of particular importance is the intersection of Gaines St./Stadium Dr./Lake Bradford Rd. ("Intersection"). There are two new student housing projects under development adjacent to the Intersection that will considerably increase the burden on the Intersection, thus necessitating road improvements. Fortunately, because these projects are still in their development stages, an opportunity to address the complexity of the Intersection exists, but becomes increasingly more challenging as time passes. Accordingly, we are requesting that the redesign of the Intersection be elevated in importance and be included on a Project Priority List ("PPL") for future inclusion on the CRTPA's Transportation Improvement Plan ("TIP") at the next available opportunity. (FSU previously elevated concerns over student safety relating to this intersection in a June 2016 letter to Rick Fernandez. See attached.)

For the past several years, there has been discussion about modifying the Intersection to promote the safe passage of pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles alike. FSU's 2016 letter expressed concerns over the complexity of this intersection specifically pertaining to student safety and the forthcoming student housing development called Stadium Enclave that is now under construction on the site of the old concrete plant. The impetus for this concern is the funneling of students to the Intersection that currently requires traversing 10 lanes of traffic across five landing areas. The challenge was exacerbated by the CSX rail spur that precluded students from efficiently crossing Gaines St. further to the east at one of the two-lane crossings. Recently, the developer of the Stadium Enclave acquired the CSX spur. It is our understanding that the purpose of this acquisition is to create additional access points to Gaines Street and to develop a bicycle alley along the corridor.

Based on conversations with FDOT dating back to last year, it is our understanding that improving the Intersection is very challenging and there are limited opportunities for modification. Further, it is our understanding that the right solution will likely involve a holistic review of the traffic patterns around the Intersection as well as the adjoining streets, including, but not limited to Stadium, Gaines, Lake Bradford,

Jackson Bluff, Eppes, Airport, Hendry, and Woodward. Because CSX has sold their property and the intention, at least in part, is to construct some type of access point, it is our recommendation that the Intersection be elevated in importance and be designated on a PPL.

Orange Avenue Widening:

During the Sept 19, 2017, meeting of the CRTPA Board, the study to widen Orange Avenue moved up to the #6 priority on the Transportation Improvement Program for FY 2019-2023. The expansion of this roadway to include additional traffic lanes, bike lanes, sidewalks, multimodal trails, improved lighting, and other necessary improvements is key to enhancing safety and the future economic growth of southwest Tallahassee.

Recently, the staff of the Blueprint IA conducted dozens of community outreach meetings to receive public comment on the amendment of the Blueprint 2020 Airport Gateway Project. At each of these meetings, there were numerous comments from residents of neighborhoods such as Callen, Providence, Lake Bradford and other local communities expressing their concerns about the current traffic and pedestrian challenges along the Orange Avenue corridor. We echo those concerns, and encourage your continued attention to the priority of this project to start design as soon as possible. Florida State University supports transportation improvements that enhance the safety of students and other pedestrians around the University campus and surrounding community.

In closing, we respectfully request the CRTPA Board carefully consider the challenges and opportunities presented with each of these road segments.

Specifically, we request that CRTPA extract from the Southwest Area Transportation Plan the Gaines St./Stadium Drive/Lake Bradford Rd. Intersection and elevate this intersection to a Project Priority List to be included in the next TIP.

We recognize that we are not intimately familiar with the CRTPA process, and we understand that what we are requesting may not be the most appropriate method of addressing the pressing concerns at the Intersection. If we have missed the mark, we ask that the CRTPA direct its staff to bring forward a recommendation for the most expeditious path to include the Intersection in the earliest possible TIP.

Respectfully,



Kevin Graham
Executive Director - FSU Real Estate Foundation

CC: Greg Slay
Reese Goad
Ben Pingree
Kyle Clark
Dennis Bailey
Dustin Dailey



June 20, 2016

Rick Fernandez
Office of the City Manager
300 South Adams Street
Tallahassee FL 32301

In light of the City of Tallahassee Commission's discussion of the sale of the 2.64 acre parcel (adjacent to the Cemex Construction parcel) to ZAC, LLC (also referred to as Zimmer Development) (commonly referred to herein as "Developer") which will serve to augment the real property proposed for the development of a student housing complex located in the southeast quadrant of Gaines Street and Lake Bradford Road, Florida State University ("University") offers its comments. The University requests the City of Tallahassee consider and adequately address significant concerns the University has regarding student safety prior to providing final development approvals.

While the University does not generally object to the sale of the 2.64 acres to the Developer or the proposed development of new student housing proximate to campus, the University does have very real concerns regarding student safety. The proposed development, once constructed, will increase student pedestrian traffic required to cross Gaines Street in order to access FSU's campus. Pedestrian traffic that attempts to cross Gaines at Lake Bradford must traverse up to 10 lanes of traffic with divided medians and navigate five landing areas in a complicated and non-traditional intersection.

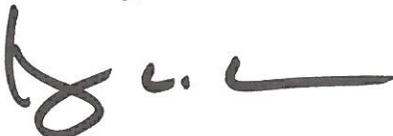
In a meeting dated September 18, 2015, the University, the FSU Real Estate Foundation, Developer, Developer's counsel, Moore Bass Consulting and the City of Tallahassee gathered to discuss development issues associated with the Developer's proposed student housing development plan. During the meeting, members of the University's Facilities Department and the FSU Real Estate Foundation expressed concerns over the risk the development project posed to student safety. This concern was driven primarily by the Developer's representation of up to 900 new beds and the need to direct student traffic north along Lake Bradford Road and across Gaines Street in order to access the University's campus. The University distinguished its concern related to this project from other student housing recently built along the southern border of Gaines Street based on the stop lights and crosswalks that were designed and constructed further east along Gaines to facilitate student pedestrian traffic proximate to those properties. At the conclusion of the meeting, Zimmer indicated that they would respond back to the University with information that adequately addresses our concerns over student safety. To date, the University has not received any additional information from Zimmer, their legal counsel, or other consultants involved in the project.

It is our understanding that since the September 2015 meeting the City has been in regular discussions with the Developer to modify and improve the development program. The University has not been a part of these subsequent discussions, but understands that there has been progress on many of the aesthetic aspects of the project. It is also our understanding that the scale of the project has been reduced from +/-900 student housing beds to approximately 600. The University strongly encourages the City to maintain a high standard for architectural and aesthetic elements of new developments proximate to campus as well as a requirement for strict compliance by the development community.

The University has not been informed of any measures proposed to ensure student safety in this heavily trafficked area. Thus, the University requests that, in light of the inherent danger this development project presents, the City require the Developer to implement a pedestrian traffic plan that safely routes the future residents of the proposed student housing development across Gaines Street. One potential solution is to cause pedestrian traffic to route east out of the proposed development and to cross Gaines Street at Stone Valley. This is a much less complicated intersection where students will only be required to traverse two lanes of traffic. Similarly, for pedestrian traffic that must cross Gaines Street at Lake Bradford, the University suggests that the City perform a peak hour analysis and consider the adequacy of the existing cross walks, landing areas, signal timing and other factors that contribute to a safe pedestrian experience. We would also be open to other discussions and proposed routes to further enhance student safety.

As previously indicated, our concern is specifically focused on student safety. The University is anxious to see that pedestrian access across Gaines Street is properly addressed. It is the University's hope that the City shares these concerns about this heavily traveled intersection (approximately 25,000 cars per day), and will ensure the safety of the students entrusted to us as well as the safety of the other future occupants of the proposed housing community. The University requests the City consider its concerns and respond in a manner that will sufficiently mitigate the increased risk this proposed development presents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Clark', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kyle Clark

Vice President for Finance & Administration

CC: Wayne Tedder
Judy Donahoe
David Coburn
Carolyn Egan
Dennis Bailey
Kevin Graham
Will Butler